

Parental Correlates of Preschooler Physical Activity

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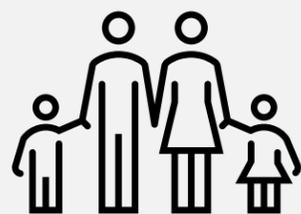
Background

- In combination with healthy eating, physical activity is an essential component of a healthy lifestyle that can help prevent chronic diseases among children.
- As role models and gatekeepers, parents can influence their child's health behaviors through healthy eating and physical activity (PA) practices.
- Children can learn behaviors from different contexts.
- Since parents are involved in different contexts of a child's life, parents' behavior in one health domain (e.g., nutrition) may be associated with children's health behavior in a different domain (e.g., PA).

Objective

To investigate the associations between demographics and parental feeding practices, and child physical activity in preschool-age children

Methods



Participants of this cross-sectional study included 273 parents of preschool-age children ages 3 to 5 years, recruited from early childhood education settings (n=24).

Methods (cont.)

Analyses: Logistic regression

Independent variables

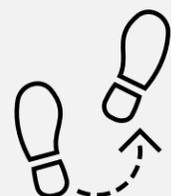
- Parent demographics (age, gender, birthplace, ethnicity, marital status, education, household income, employment status)
- Child demographics (age, gender)
- Child fruit and vegetable consumption (USDA)
- Parent beliefs and attitudes about weight status and feeding practices (CFQ) (Birch et al., 2001)
- Parent role modeling (PARM) (Palfreyman et al., 2014)
- Home meal preparation practices (F-Eat) (Bauer et al., 2012; Berge et al., 2012; Bruening et al., 2012)

Dependent variables



Moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA)

“When actively playing, your preschooler breathes quickly and/or sweats”



Total physical activity (TPA)

“How many minutes per day of physical activity does your preschooler get?”

Results

Parent's married status (+), child weight (+), and spousal meal preparation (-) were associated with preschooler participation in MVPA.

Parent monitoring (+), parent weight (-), and food restriction (-) were associated with preschooler participation in TPA.

Parent healthy eating role modeling was not associated with MVPA or TPA.



Conclusion

- We found that parent feeding practices are associated with increased child PA.
- This suggests a need for nutrition and PA programs to consider the effects of parent behavior across health domains.
- Future research and physical activity interventions can address parent feeding practices to further improve our strategies for encouraging healthy habits in children.

Acknowledgements

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